

and adaptations thereof will be readily apparent to those skilled in this art without departing from the spirit and scope of the present invention.--.

On page 16:

cancel lines 1-8.

5 **IN THE CLAIMS:**

On page 17, at line 1, replace "Patent Claims" with --WE CLAIM AS OUR INVENTION--.

Please amend claims 1-8 as follows:

- 10 1. (Amended) Switching equipment [(1)] for a communication network,
said communication network comprising:
an adjacent switching equipment which is connected to said [whereby
the] switching equipment [(1) is connected] via [at least one] connecting paths
[path (9 - 15) to at least one other adjacent switching equipment (2, 3) of the
communication network, and],
15 said [whereby the] connecting paths [(9, 15) connected to the switching
equipment (1) are] being divided into first [(9 - 11)] connecting paths and second
[(12 - 15)] connecting paths, wherein [whereby], when a connection request is
present, said [the] switching equipment [(1)] is only authorized for said [the] first
connecting paths [(9 - 11)] for allocating a transmission channel for said [this]
20 connection request, and said [whereas the] adjacent switching equipment [(2, 3)]
that is connected to said [the] first switching equipment [(1)] via a [the]
corresponding second connecting path is authorized for allocating a corresponding
transmission channel for said [the] second connecting paths [(12 - 15)],
said switching equipment comprising:
25 a [with] first storage [storing means ~~(4)~~] for [purposes of] storing bits of
information about said [the] free or occupied resources of said [the] first
connecting paths [~~(9 - 11)~~], and];

a controller detecting [with control means (6) in order to], on a [the] basis of said [the] bits of information stored in said [the] first storing means [(4)], [detect] a suitable first connecting path [(9 - 11),] which provides sufficient resources for a [the] desired connection, when a connection request is present; and [, characterized in that]

a second storage [storing means (16) are present] for [purposes of] storing bits of information about said [the] free or occupied resources of said [the] second connecting paths [~~(12 - 15)~~], [and that]

said controller selecting [the control means (6) are fashioned such that they select an] one of said adjacent switching equipment [(2, 3)] on a [the] basis of said [the] bits of information stored in said [the] second storage [storing means (16)] when a suitable first connecting path [(9 - 11)] could not be detected on a [the] basis of said [the] bits of information stored in said [the] first storage [storing means (4)] given a presence of a connection request,

said one of the adjacent [which] switching equipment [(2, 3) is] being connected to said [the] switching equipment [(1)] via one of said [a] second connecting paths [path (12 - 15)], which is more likely able to provide [probably provides] sufficient resources for said [the] desired connection, and

said controller transmitting [such that they transmit] an inquiry message to said [the] selected adjacent switching equipment [(2, 3)] for [purposes of] allocating a transmission channel for said [the] desired connection.

2. (Amended) Switching equipment according to claim 1, wherein [characterized in that,] said controller is [the control means (6) are] fashioned such that it [they], subsequent to said [the] detection of a suitable first connecting path [(9 - 11)], transmits [transmit] bits of information about an [the] allocated transmission channel for said [the] desired connection and bits of information about said [the] detected connecting path [(9 - 11)] to said [the] adjacent switching equipment [(2, 3)], which is connected to said [the] first switching equipment [(1)] via said [the] detected first connecting path [(9 - 11)].

3. (Amended) Switching equipment according to claim 2, wherein
[characterized in that] said controller is [the control means (6) are] fashioned such
that it [they], when a first connecting path [(9- 11)] with resources that are
sufficient for said [the] connection request could not be detected, transmits said
5 [transmit the] inquiry message for allocating a transmission channel for said [the]
desired connection to said [the] adjacent switching equipment [(2, 3)] in [the form
of] a forward message without bits of information about said [the] connecting path
or said [the] transmission channel.

4. (Amended) Switching equipment according to claim 1, wherein [one of
the previous claims, characterized in that] said controller is [the control means (6)
are] fashioned such that it [they], subsequent to said [the] inquiry message to said
[the] adjacent switching equipment [equipments (2, 3)] selected by said controller
[the control means (6)] and subsequent to said [the] allocation of a transmission
channel via [by means of] said [the] adjacent switching equipment [(2, 3), renew]
15 , renews said [the] bits of information, which are stored in said [the] second
storage [storing means (6)], on a [the] basis of a confirmation message of said
[the] adjacent switching equipment [(2, 3)], whereby said [the] confirmation
message comprises [comprise] bits of information about said [the] transmission
channel allocated by said [the] adjacent switching equipment [(2, 3)], about [the]
20 resources occupied for said [the] desired connection and about said [the] second
connecting path [(12 - 15)] selected via [by means of] said [the] adjacent
switching equipment [(2, 3)].

5. (Amended) Switching equipment according to claim 1, wherein [one of
the previous claims, characterized in that] said [the] communication between said
25 [the] switching equipment [(1)] and said [the] adjacent [further] switching
equipment [equipments (2, 3) of the communication network] ensues via B-ISUP
signalization messages.

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6. (Amended) Switching equipment according to claim 1, further comprising: [one of the previous claims, characterized in that]

a third storage [storing means (5) are provided] for [purposes of] storing configuration data of said [the] switching equipment [(1)], [whereby] wherein said [the] configuration data prescribe, regarding said [the] switching equipment [(1)], which of said [the] connecting paths connected to said [the] switching equipment [(1)] are first connecting paths [(9 - 11)], for which said [the] switching equipment [(1)] is authorized for allocating a transmission channel when a connection request is present, and which of said [the] connecting paths are second connecting paths [(12 - 15)], for which said [the] switching equipment [(1)] is not authorized, but for which a corresponding said [correspondingly] adjacent switching equipment [(2, 3)] is authorized for allocating a transmission channel for said [the] connection request.

7. (Amended) Switching equipment according to claim 6, wherein [characterized in that] said [the] configuration data stored in said [the] third storage [storing means (5)] prescribe to which said adjacent switching equipment [(2, 3)] said [the] switching equipment [(1)] is to detect a connecting path when a connection request is present.

8. (Amended) Switching equipment according to claim 1, wherein said communication network is [Utilization of a switching equipment according to one of the previous claims in] an ATM broadband communication network.

Please add the following claims 9-16.

9. A method for using switching equipment in a communication network, said communication network comprising said switching equipment, adjacent switching equipment and connecting paths, said connecting paths connecting said switching equipment to said adjacent switching equipment,

said connecting paths comprising first connecting paths and second connecting paths,

said switching equipment comprising a controller, a first storage, and a second storage,

5 said method comprising the steps of:

authorizing, by said switching equipment, an allocation of a transmission channel in response to a connection request only for said first connecting paths;

authorizing, by said adjacent switching equipment, an allocation of a transmission channel in response to a connection request only for said second connecting paths;

10 storing, by said first storage, bits of information about free or occupied resources of said first connecting paths;

detecting, by said controller, a suitable first connecting path based on said bits of information stored in said first storage which provides for desired connections, when a connection request for a desired connection is present;

15 storing, by said second storage, bits of information about free or occupied resources of said second connecting paths;

when a suitable first connecting path could not be detected in said step of detecting a suitable first connecting path,

20 selecting, by said controller, an adjacent switching equipment on a basis of said bits of information stored in said second storage when a suitable first connecting path could not be detected in said step of detecting a suitable first connecting path;

25 transmitting, by said controller, an inquiry message to said selected adjacent switching equipment for allocating a transmission channel for said desired connection requested by said connection request; and

allocating a transmission channel for said desired connection.

10. The method according to claim 9, further comprising the step of:
transmitting, by said controller subsequent to said step of detecting a
suitable first connecting path, bits of information about said allocated
transmission channel and bits of information about said detected first connecting
path;

11. The method according to claim 10, wherein said inquiry message
transmitted in said step of transmitting the inquiry message is transmitted as a
forward message without bits of information about said connecting paths or said
transmission channel.

12. The method according to claim 9, further comprising the step of:
renewing said bits of information stored in said second storage, by said
controller subsequent to said step of transmitting an inquiry message and
subsequent to said step of allocating a transmission channel, based on a
confirmation message of said adjacent switching equipment, said confirmation
message comprising bits of information about said transmission channel allocated
by said adjacent switching equipment, about resources occupied for said desired
connection, and about said second connecting path selected by said adjacent
switching equipment.

13. The method according to claim 9, wherein communication between said
switching equipment and said adjacent switching equipment ensues via B-ISUP
signalization messages.

14. The method according to claim 9, wherein said switching equipment
further comprises a third storage, said method further comprising the step of:
storing configuration data of said switching equipment by said third
storage, wherein said configuration data comprise information about which of said
connecting paths connected to said switching equipment are first connecting paths